

Wisconsin Post High School Outcomes Survey for Individuals with Disabilities

Executive Summary Year 4

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is committed to identifying and responding to the needs of students with disabilities.

To that end, it is necessary to document the post high school outcomes of students with disabilities, and to use that information to make programming and planning decisions to improve education and transition services for students, and to ultimately improve their post high school outcomes.

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WISCONSIN STATEWIDE AND LEA POST HIGH SCHOOL OUTCOMES

The final regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) were intended to improve the post high school outcomes of youth with disabilities by requiring state and local education agencies to develop and implement formal procedures and strategies to address this critical period of transition. A benefit of the WPHSOS is to provide a framework that local education agencies (LEA) can utilize to conduct their own outcomes studies, identify critical outcomes and needs, and improve the post high school outcomes of future students.

By collecting the outcomes of youth with disabilities who have exited high school, the state education agency (SEA) and LEAs have data that can be utilized in the following ways:

- local education agencies (LEA) can implement a similar outcomes survey to review outcomes of students who have exited their educational system.
- SEA and LEA surveys can measure desired outcomes by comparing state, local, and national data.
- by examining the IEP transition requirements of IDEA, LEAs can identify specific areas of weakness, implement research-based best-practice transition planning, and demonstrate improved outcomes for exiters.
- LEAs can review their high school curriculum, community participation and work experiences offered to students to identify specific areas that need to be addressed to improve the outcomes of students exiting their high school placement.
- LEAs can examine different outcomes specifically related to gender, ethnicity or disability to detect areas of weakness in current high school programming that may affect outcomes.
- LEAs can assess participation in the IEP transition planning process by outside agencies, postsecondary educational training institutes, and employment agencies in meeting the transition needs of youth with disabilities.

SUMMARY OF KEY OUTCOMES FOR 2002-03 EXITERS

Independent Living

- ❖ 53% of the respondents in the survey continue to live at home with their parents
- ❖ 36% of the respondents live independently
- ❖ 81% of the respondents report getting together socially more than one times per week

Postsecondary Education

- ❖ 51% of the respondents participate in postsecondary education
- ❖ 27% of the respondents attend an academic (2-year or 4-year) college
- ❖ 24% of the respondents attend technical college

Employment

- ❖ 69% of the respondents are employed
- ❖ 73% of employed youth works more than 20 hours per week
- ❖ 47% of employed youth work more than 37 hours per week
- ❖ 50% of the employed youth earn \$8.00 or more per hour and 40% (20%) earn less than \$8.00
- ❖ 53% of employed youth earns between \$5.75 and \$9.99 per hour
- ❖ 22% of employed youth earns more than \$10.00 per hour
- ❖ 32% of the respondents are working and also participating in postsecondary education
- ❖ 11% of the respondents are neither employed nor attending postsecondary education

SURVEY BACKGROUND

The National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students (NLTS) was mandated in 1983 by the United States Congress to provide information to practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and others in the special education community regarding the transition of youth with disabilities from high school to early adulthood. The first NLTS (1987 through 1993) included more than 8,000 youth with disabilities from 300 school districts across the nation, representing students in high school special education during the 1985-86 school year. Telephone interviews, surveys of teachers and principals who served them, and analyses of students' school records contributed to a comprehensive look at many aspects of the lives of young people with disabilities. The NLTS was the first study to describe the experiences and outcomes of youth with disabilities nationally during high school and early adulthood. Findings of the NLTS have been widely cited in the literature, and can be reviewed in-depth at <http://www.sri.com/policy/cehs/dispolicy/nlts.html> or by contacting the Office of Special Education Programs at 202-205-9864.

The second national study (NLTS2) began in 2001 and involves a nationally representative sample of almost 12,000 students who were 13-16 years old and received special education in December 2000. In 2003, more than 7,000 parents and guardians completed phone interviews for a 70% response rate. The study will follow these students until 2010. Results of the NLTS-2 can be viewed at <http://www.nlts2.org> as they become available.

In preparation for this survey, an extensive literature review was conducted to examine similar data collection methods in other states and to ensure similarities in survey design with the NLTS and NLTS2.

SURVEY YEARS

| | |
|---|--|
| Year 1 Group 1 | St. Norbert College Survey Center interviewed a statewide random sample of 389 students with disabilities who exited high school from LEAs in Wisconsin between December 1999 and December 2000. (7% of state exiters) |
| Year 2 LEA Mini-grants | 32 LEAs interviewed 520 students with disabilities who exited high school from LEAs in Wisconsin between December 2000 and December 2001. CESA #11 piloted a data-entry disk and process mini-grant participants utilized when conducting local district outcomes survey. |
| Year 3 Group 1 (3) Re-interviewed | St. Norbert College Survey Center re-interviewed 291 (75%) of Group 1 exiters (exited high school between December 1999 and December 2000) now out of high school for 3 year. |
| Group 2 | St. Norbert College Survey Center interviewed a statewide random sample of 600 students with disabilities who exited high school from LEAs in Wisconsin between December 2001 and December 2002 (10% of state exiters). |
| Year 4 LEA Mini-grants | 10 LEAs and Wisconsin State Transition Initiative (WSTI) coordinators interviewed 331 students with disabilities who exited high school between December 2002 and December 2003. CESA #11, mini-grant participants, and WSTI coordinators piloted the outcomes survey process (8% of state exiters). |
| WSTI Survey | WSTI coordinators implemented the outcomes survey to determine student benefits from participating in the Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative. |

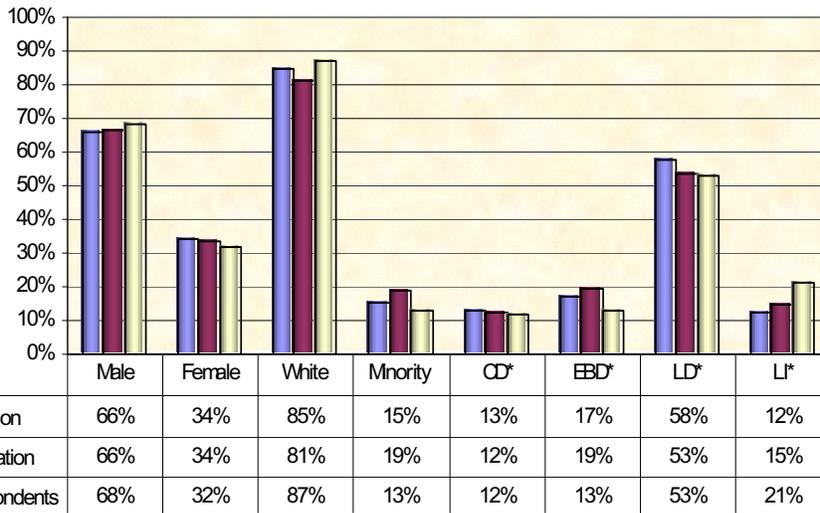
LIMITATIONS OF THE SURVEY

A limiting factor in the survey is the small number of responses for individual items when analyzed by ethnicity and low incidence disabilities. Many of these individual cells had fewer than five responses, making it necessary to interpret results with caution.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

For this study, students with disabilities who successfully exited their high school education between December 2002 and December 2003 were included in the population. The following chart shows the comparison of the students with disabilities who exited in the state (State Population), students in the districts eligible to participate in the study (District Population), and those district students who responded to the interview questions and had their senior or last year of school IEP reviewed (District Respondents). Information presented in this report is based on the responses of the District Respondents. For portions of this report, ethnic categories of Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/Not Hispanic, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaskan Native were combined and grouped “Minority”. Similarly, the disability areas of hearing impaired (HI), visually impaired (VI), speech and language impaired (S/L), autism (Autism), deaf/blind (D/B), other health impaired (OHI), orthopedic impairment (OI) and traumatic brain injury (TBI), are combined and grouped as “Low Incidence” (LI).

Comparison of State Population, District Population and District Respondents by Gender, Ethnicity and Disability



State Population n= 6790 | District Population n=580 | District Respondents n=331

Attempts were made to contact all 580 former students:

331 (57%) student telephone interviews were successfully completed. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 5% at the 99% confidence level.

Of the 331 successfully completed interviews:

- 58% were the former students
- 38% were the parents of the former students
- 4% identified themselves as guardian or other

Of the 139 former students who were unable to respond for themselves:

- 14% were unable to communicate responses
- 7% were unable to be located or unavailable
- 79% indicated another reason they could not respond

INDEPENDENT LIVING - LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Independent living assesses residential arrangements and general community participation, including engagement in activities outside the home, residential independence, and social and civic activities. The ability to live on one’s own is believed to be evidence of the ability of youth to perform many common adult tasks.

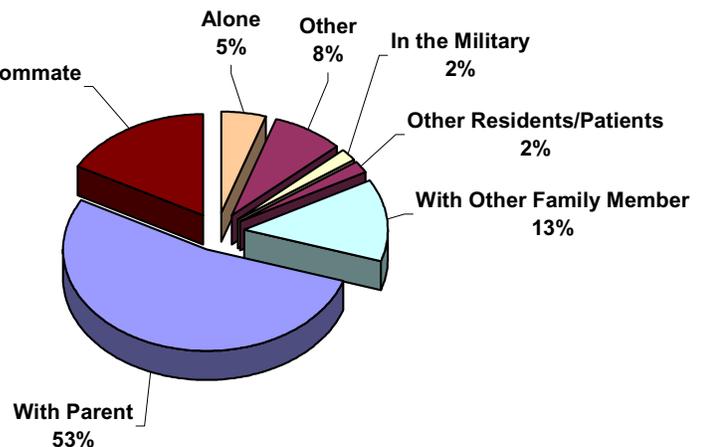
Living Arrangements One year after Exiting High School

- 53% Continue to live with their parent(s)
- 37% Report living independently, meaning they are living alone, with another family member, with a spouse or roommate, or are in the military
- 56% Female youth continue to live with their parents
- 51% Male youth continue to live with their parents
- 48% Minority youth continue to live with their parents
- 63% Youth with cognitive disabilities continue to live with their parents
- 56% Emotional behavioral disabilities continue to live with their parents

Living Independently One Year after Exiting High School

- 38% Male youth
- 31% Female youth
- 36% White youth
- 36% Minority youth
- 20% Youth with cognitive disabilities
- 38% Youth with learning disabilities
- 44% Youth with low incidence disabilities
- 33% Youth with emotional behavioral disabilities
- 3% Own their own home

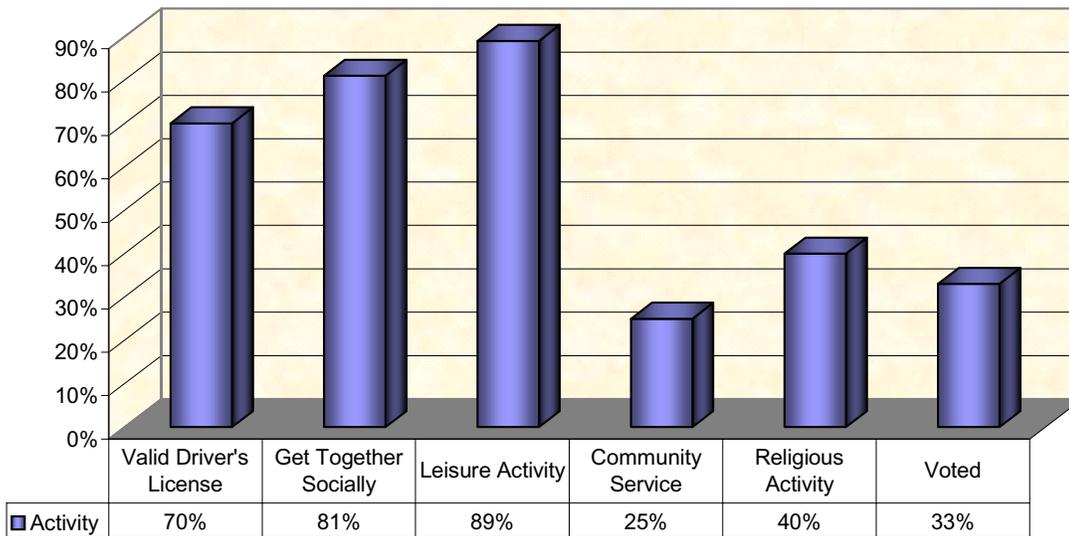
Living Arrangement (n=331)



INDEPENDENT LIVING - SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL

Of the 331 respondents, 81% report getting together socially with friends or family members (other than those they live with) more than once per week, 11% report they get together socially one or more times per month, and 5% indicate they socialize less than one time per month. Nationally, 82% of youth regularly participate in social activities (NLTS, 1993).

Social/Recreational Activities in Past Six Months (n=331)



TRANSPORTATION

70% have a valid driver's license
 4% have a suspended license
 16% do not have a license but planned to obtain one
 4% do not have a valid license and do not plan to obtain one
 5% report being medically restricted from obtaining a driver's license.
 12% indicate getting a ride to a social event is a barrier to their participation

CONTACT WITH ADULT AGENCIES IN HIGH SCHOOL

37% of the IEPs developed for the former students' senior year indicated a need for involvement from an outside agency
 29% indicated an outside agency was invited to the IEP meeting, of which:
 73% indicated the agency attended the student's IEP meeting.
 33% of the former students' IEPs contained a statement of interagency responsibility or needed linkages

ADULT AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/SUPPORT SERVICES

8% of respondents report utilizing the support of a one-on-one personal care assistant (i.e. aide, service coordinator or manager)
 7% report working with a counselor or social worker to maintain their independent living arrangement
 20% report they are receiving services from an adult agency (e.g. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Human Services)

AGENCIES UTILIZED

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) services
 Job Center
 Human Services

AGENCY SERVICES

- ◆ transportation to work
- ◆ workforce resources/job coaching/job placement interviews and training
- ◆ postsecondary education tuition paid
- ◆ paid travel (mileage reimbursement) for college

SUGGESTIONS BY FORMER STUDENTS TO IMPROVE INDEPENDENT LIVING

Respondents were asked for suggestions for their previous high school for adding activities or classes that may be valuable in improving outcomes in leisure and social activities, community participation and independent living for future students. The following is a sampling of the responses:

- ❖ More classes/more options (bookkeeping, business, daily living skills, advanced English, math, spelling, computer programming, hands-on, automotive, shop, communication skills, algebra, study skills)
- ❖ Setting up a high school plan at the beginning of freshman year
- ❖ Very important to have a good case manager who helps students from slipping through the cracks.
- ❖ Give the kids a packet of info to take to their college. Some kids don't know how to advocate for themselves and describe their needs accurately.
- ❖ More advice from guidance/case manager about classes needed to get into college.

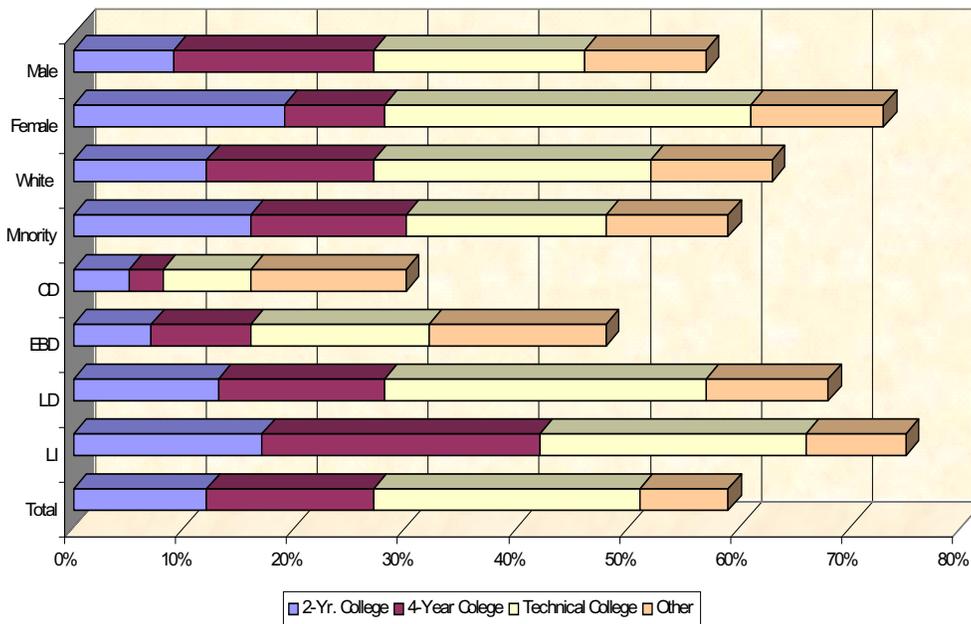
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Postsecondary education includes any type of formal education program after high school. Former students may be enrolled in a 2-year or 4-year academic college or technical training program. A technical college offers training that leads to specific certification in a field of study. Postsecondary education may also include a formal apprenticeship program or the military. Adult education and job training are not considered formal postsecondary education programs, and generally do not lead to a degree or general employability skill development, but are included in this study as types of postsecondary education.

PARTICIPATION IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

51% of former students are attending or have attended some type of postsecondary education programs. 7% of the former students started a postsecondary program then discontinued. Of the 331 students in the survey, 69% of the former students indicated it was their primary IEP intention to attend postsecondary either full-time (47%) or part-time (22%). Participation in postsecondary education is fairly even in relation to gender and ethnicity. Youth with cognitive disabilities attend less than is represented in the population of youth with disabilities. Youth with learning disabilities (56%) and youth with low incidence disabilities (63%) represent the greatest majority of students participating in all types of postsecondary education.

Participation in Postsecondary Education (n=331)



24% Attend a Technical college
 15% Attend a 4-year college
 12% Attend a 2-year college

NLTS (1993) data indicate that among youth with disabilities out of high school up to 3 years, 16% enrolled in academic programs and 15% enrolled in technical programs. Nationally, 27% of those who complete high school are enrolled in postsecondary education compared to 68% of the general student population.

SELF-ADVOCACY AND DISCLOSURE

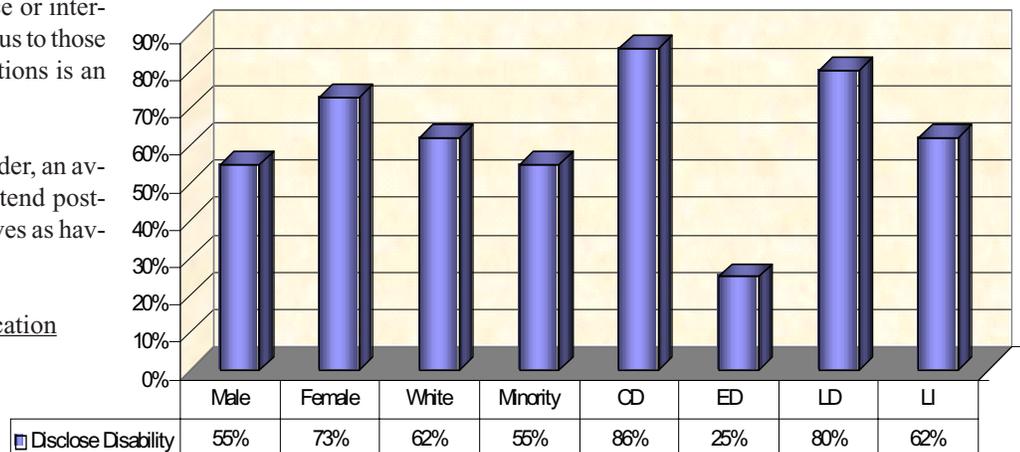
Self-determination is defined as acting as the primary causal agent in one's life and making choices and decisions regarding one's quality of life free from undue external influence or interference. Disclosing one's disability status to those who can provide needed accommodations is an activity of self-advocacy.

Regardless of type of disability or gender, an average of 62% of young adults who attend postsecondary education identify themselves as having a disability to someone.

Those who attend postsecondary education disclose their disability to:

- 29% a counselor/advisor
- 25% a disability specialist
- 8% their classroom teacher
- 27% no one

Percentage Who Disclose Their Disability Status at the Place of Postsecondary Education by Gender, Ethnicity and Disability (n=230)

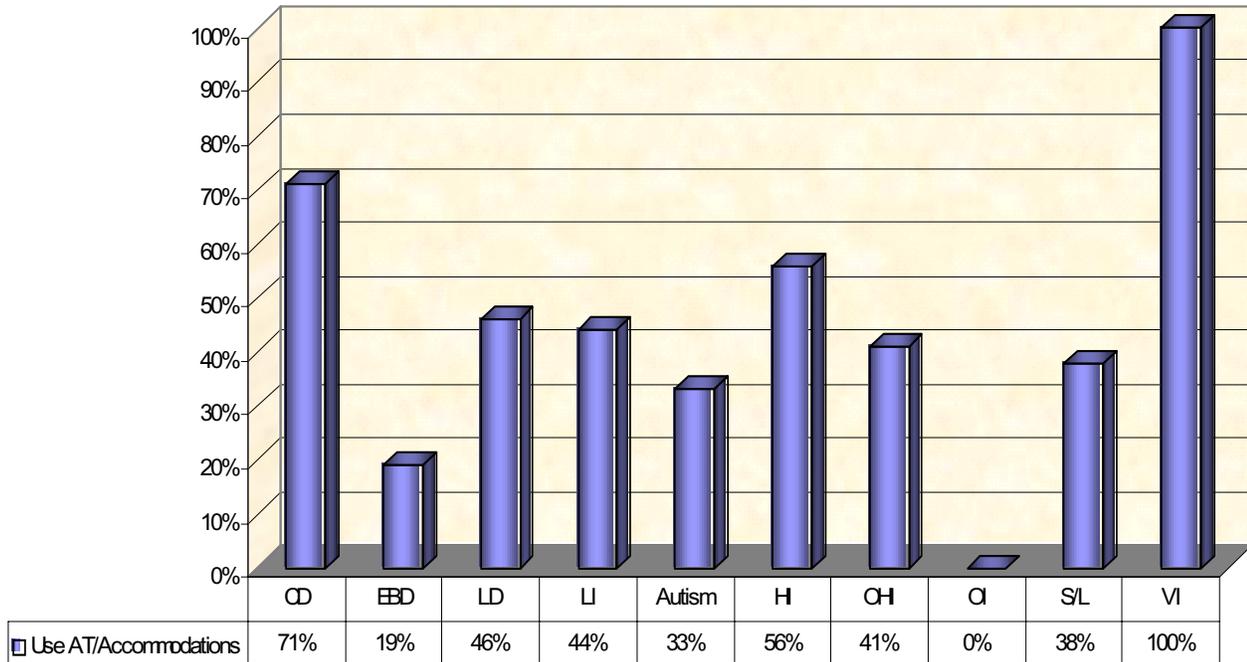


POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

ACCOMMODATIONS AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Of the 168 youth with disabilities participating in postsecondary education, 44% report using some type of accommodation or assistive technology (AT) device. Female youth (52%) are more likely than male youth (40%) to use A.T. or accommodations. White youth (45%) are more likely to use A.T. and accommodations than minority youth (35%). Data in relation to students with specific types of low incidence disabilities should be interpreted cautiously as the numbers of each type of disability are small.

Percentage Who Use AT/Accommodations at Their Place of Postsecondary Training
by Gender, Ethnicity and Disability (n=168)



Assistive Technology Utilized

Software Programs:
 Dragon Naturally Speaking, Dynovox,
 Spellcheckers, Scanning and reading programs
 Calculators
 Tests and books on tape
 FM System
 Laptop for Notetaking
 Carbon Paper Notebook
 Measuring Devices
 Keypad

Accommodations Provided

Seating in front of the class
 Spelling help
 Extended time on tests and assignments
 Note takers/notetaking
 Quiet, separate room for tests
 Reader
 Writing or learning lab help
 Test with a teacher
 Tutoring
 Vision/Hearing /LD assistance

SUGGESTIONS BY FORMER STUDENTS TO IMPROVE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION OUTCOMES

Respondents were asked for suggestions for their previous high school for adding activities or classes that may be valuable in improving outcomes for future students in the area of postsecondary education. The following is a sampling of the responses:

- ❖ Better training for teachers in regard to students with disabilities beginning post secondary education
- ❖ More information about different colleges
- ❖ Schools need to provide more community work experiences for motivation
- ❖ Prepare for homework & reading volume required in college
- ❖ More career trips
- ❖ Positive relationship with case manager very important for success

EMPLOYMENT

Two outcomes of employment were considered: (1) whether the former student held a competitive job outside the home for which he or she was paid, and (2) the compensation and benefits the youth received for their work. For this study, employment was identified as working for pay. Underemployment was identified as earning less than \$8.00 per hour and working less than 20 hours per week of paid employment.

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

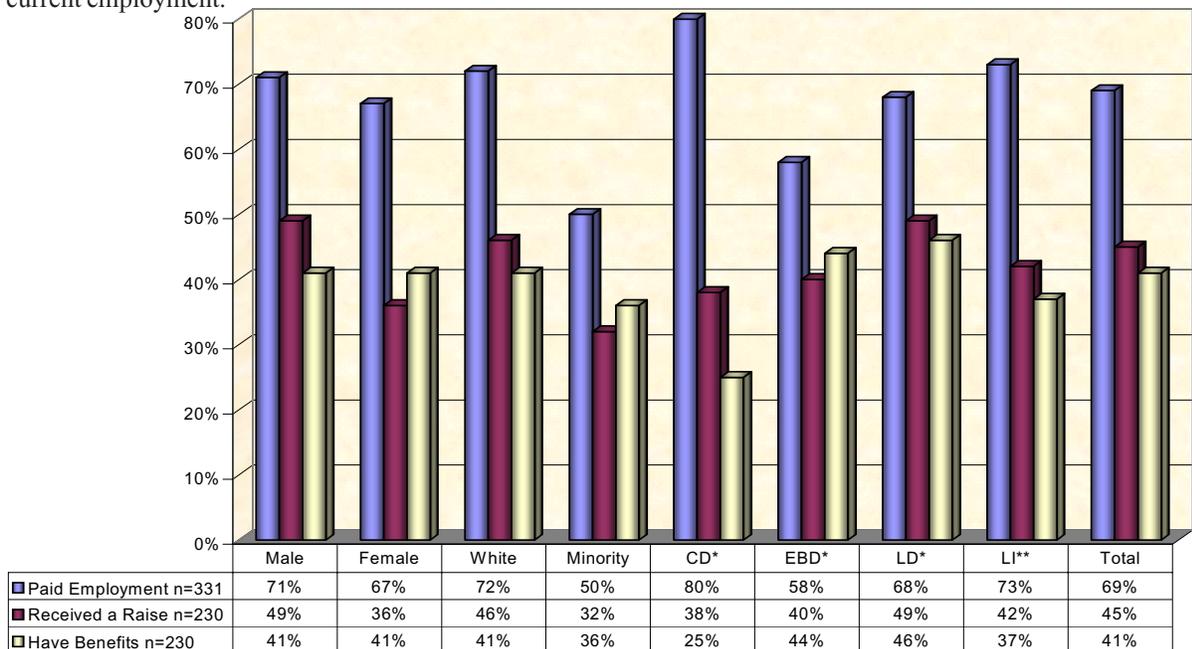
The following table indicates that of the 331 respondents, 69% report being employed for pay, with most youth with disabilities employed in business/sales and factory/production. This is the lowest level of employment assessed in the four years of this study (74%, 78%, 80%, respectively). On the national level, 55% of youth with disabilities were competitively employed when they had been out of high school for up to three years. (NLTS 1993)

Primary Type of Post High School Employment (n=230)

| Primary Type of Employment | % | Primary Type of Employment | % |
|--------------------------------|----|--------------------------------------|----|
| Agriculture/Farming | 5 | Computer/Office Equipment/Technology | .3 |
| Construction | 8 | Food Service/Restaurant | 14 |
| Factory/Industry | 17 | Protective Services/Security | .3 |
| Retail/Sales/Marketing | 16 | Nursing/Medical/Health Care | 7 |
| Clerical/Office/Secretarial | 3 | Cosmetology/Barbering | .3 |
| Mechanics/Repairer | 4 | Education | .3 |
| Child Care/Cleaning/Janitorial | 5 | Don't Know/Refused | 1 |
| Management/Supervisory | 0 | Other | 20 |
| Logging/Fishing/Trapping | 0 | | |

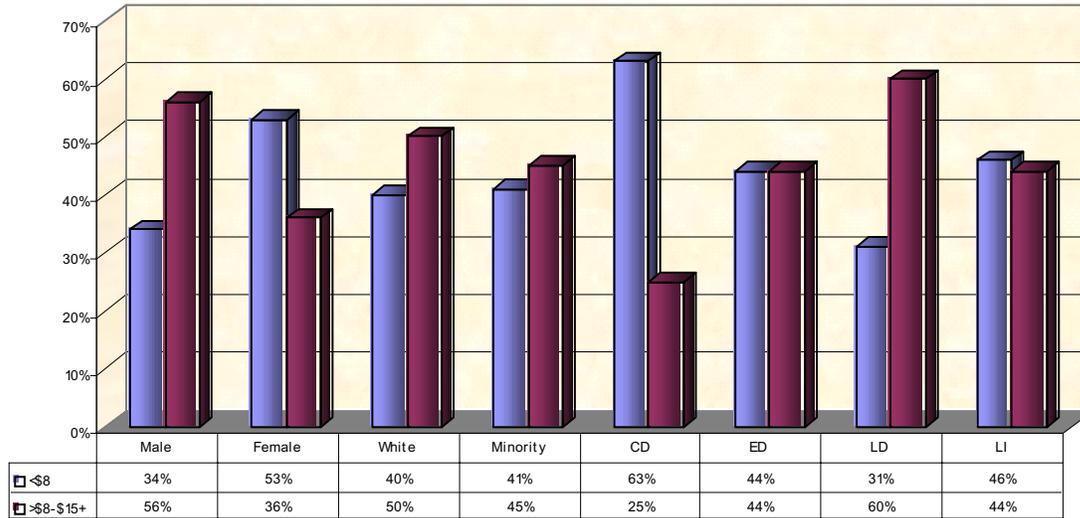
EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER, ETHNICITY AND DISABILITY

Male youth and white youth are slightly more likely to be employed and have received a raise in pay than female youth and much more likely to be employed, receive a raise or have benefits than minority youth. Youth with CD, LD, and LI are more likely to be employed than youth with EBD. The percentage of male youth who receive benefits is equal to female youth who receive benefits. Young minority adults and those with CD are the least likely groups to receive benefits through their current employment.



EMPLOYMENT

Rate of Pay by Gender, Ethnicity and Disability (n=230)



A higher percentage of males than females earn between \$8 and \$15. Similarly, a higher percentage of white young adults earn between \$8 and \$15 than do young minority adults. The most frequent rate of pay for all categories of gender, ethnicity, and disability is between \$8.00 and \$9.99 per hour. A higher percentage of youth with cognitive disabilities earn significantly lower salaries than any other disability area. Youth with hearing impairments, other health impairments, and speech and language impairments most frequently earn between \$8.00 and \$9.99 per hour.

Of the youth with disabilities who are currently employed, the majority (34%) have been employed more than one year, 27% have been working one to six months and 28% have been working seven to 12 months. The majority (47%) of youth works more than 37 hours per week, with 73% of the former students working 20 hours per week or more. 40% earn less than \$8.00 per hour; 68% earn up to \$10.00 per hour and 22% earn \$10.00 per hour or more.

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Of those employed:

- 39% found their own jobs,
- 39% had help from family or friends
- 4% had assistance from an adult service agency

The greatest majority of youth with disabilities talked to family and friends about needed employment, while few talked to adult employment agencies. This indicates the importance family and friends have in guiding and advising youth with disabilities even after high school, and the need to better connect students with those agencies who can assist them in locating employment post high school.

Employment Assistance (n=331)

| Assistance Finding Employment | % That Would Talk To | % That Actually Talked To |
|--|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Workforce center (e.g. Job Center, Workforce Investment Act) economic development, job service | 12% | 9% |
| Human Services | 3% | 2% |
| Past School Personnel | 5% | 5% |
| DVR | 9% | 7% |
| Family/friends | 38% | 44% |
| Other | 15% | 9% |
| Unknown/Refused | 18% | 23% |

REASONS FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

Nearly one-third of young adults with disabilities report that they are currently unemployed one year after exiting from high school. The majority of youth with disabilities report they are not working because they are full-time students or because they are unable to find work. 7% report not working because they are receiving SSI benefits, which is 2% of all exiters

Reasons Former Students are Unemployed (n=101)

| Reasons for Unemployment | % |
|--|----|
| Full-time student | 45 |
| Unable to find work | 22 |
| Other | 12 |
| Disabled and/or receiving SSI | 7 |
| Unknown/Refused | 5 |
| In a correctional institution, detention or residential facility | 3 |
| Laid Off | 3 |
| Homemaker | 2 |
| Unable to find transportation | 1 |
| Not looking/volunteering | 1 |

EMPLOYMENT AS PART OF TRANSITION PLAN AND HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

- 39% of former students report they had a paying job in the community when they graduated from high school
- 45% of students had the intention in high school to begin employment full-time, rather than post secondary training following graduation
- 47% are actually working more than 37 hours per week
- 36% intended to work part-time
- 49% works less than 37 hours per week

Students with emotional behavioral disabilities were the least likely to have the IEP transition goal of beginning employment rather than postsecondary or technical training after high school and have the lowest percentage of paid employment.

SUGGESTIONS BY FORMER STUDENTS TO IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Respondents were asked for suggestions for their previous high school for adding activities or classes that may be valuable in improving employment outcomes for future students. The following is a sampling of the responses:

- ❖ More field trips to businesses, industry and schools (job fairs, career fairs)
- ❖ Make students aware of types of work they may find employment in
- ❖ More classes: finding a job, interviewing, resume writing, job skills, speaking, social skills, transition, basic living skills
- ❖ More job training programs, not everyone knows what they want to do after high school, nor can they afford college.
- ❖ More hands-on job experiences as part of educational training
- ❖ Guidance counselors could help out more

KEY IEP FINDINGS

- 93% students attended their IEP meetings developed for their senior or last year of school.
- 75% of IEPs list preferences and interests when the student did not attend the IEP meeting
- 89% percent of the IEPs listed a course of study statement
- 37% indicate a need for involvement from an outside agency
- 29% of the IEPs invited a representative from an outside agency
- 73% of invited outside agencies attended the IEP meeting
- 33% of IEPs contained a statement of interagency responsibility or needed linkages

Wisconsin Post High School Outcomes Survey for Individuals with Disabilities

WPHSOS

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SUMMARY

View of Youth with Disabilities Who Have Paid Employment, Attend Postsecondary Education and Live Independently (n = 331)

| | % Living Independently | % Attend Postsecondary | % Paid Employment |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Male | 38 | 47 | 71 |
| Female | 31 | 59 | 67 |
| White | 36 | 52 | 72 |
| Minority | 36 | 45 | 50 |
| CD* | 20 | 18 | 80 |
| EBD* | 33 | 37 | 58 |
| LD* | 38 | 56 | 68 |
| LI** | 44 | 63 | 73 |
| Autism | 50 | 75 | 25 |
| HI | 40 | 90 | 60 |
| OHI | 48 | 63 | 74 |
| OI | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| S/L | 36 | 52 | 80 |
| TBI | 100 | 0 | 100 |
| VI | 33 | 67 | 100 |
| Total | 36 | 51 | 69 |
| NLTS (3-5 years out) | 37 | 31 | 55 |

Possible Areas District Staff Might Consider When Reviewing These Data

- ❖ As having a valid driver's license provides an opportunity to participate in activities of independent living, postsecondary education and employment, districts may want to monitor the percentage of students with disabilities obtaining a valid license while still in high school.
- ❖ Since participation in postsecondary education is an avenue to higher paying jobs and increased benefits, districts may wish to investigate ways to increase student participation in a 2 year, 4 year, or technical college program.
- ❖ Since a high percentage of students do not disclose their disability status to any one at their place of postsecondary education, districts may wish to consider student self-advocacy and self-determination as an important part of transition instruction.
- ❖ Since few youth discuss needed employment options with the agencies that can assist them in finding jobs, districts may wish to familiarize students with these agencies as part of the student's transition plan.
- ❖ Since statewide post high school outcomes are not as positive for minority youth and those with cognitive disabilities as for white youth and youth with other disabilities, districts may wish to review local outcomes in these areas.

LINKS TO RESOURCES

- Executive Summaries/Final Reports** <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dlsea/een/hmprograms.html#phso>
State Improvement Plan <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/een/sipintro.html>
LEA Special Education Plan <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/een/seplan.html>
National Longitudinal Study <http://www.sri.com>
National Longitudinal Study2 <http://www.nlts2.org>
National Longitudinal Study Literature Review <http://www.sri.com/policy/cehs/dispolicy/nlts.html>
Wisconsin Statewide Transition Initiative <http://www.wsti.org>